

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"WHATEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon.)"

We have no authentic report of the proceedings of the Paris Congress of Spiritualists, if I may use a generic term to save repetition, while I fully recognise the distinction between that term and the French Spiritist, and am not ignorant of the wider scope of the Congress. In default of exact information we must fall back on the letters to the *Standard* of an imaginative gentleman who represents that solid and respectable paper in Paris. "It is the privilege," the *Standard* avers in its leading article on the subject, "of Spiritualists to use language somewhat loosely; otherwise, perhaps, they would not call themselves Spiritualists." Applying this canon of criticism to the Paris correspondent of the *Standard*, I opine he must be a Spiritualist of the reddest dye. It seems that an announcement was made that Captain Volpi would exhibit a spirit-photograph and submit evidence as to its authenticity to the Congress. This is the effect that that simple announcement had on the correspondent. He says:—

I have for the last two days been attending the deliberations of the votaries of psychical science, in the hope of witnessing the photographing of a disembodied spirit, but I regret to say I have been disappointed. No spirit has as yet been called up from the vasty deep, and no attempt has, therefore, been made to photograph a visitor from another world.

However, he got a copy of the "exhibit," and mightily it seems to have puzzled him. Not less puzzled was the leader writer at home. He had never heard of a spirit-photograph, though they have been taken by hundreds. He cannot understand how a *disembodied* spirit can have any *body* to be photographed. And at last he helplessly throws up his hands. "The distinguishing feature of all such stories is a deficiency of evidence, combined with a still more remarkable deficiency of understanding in those who tell them as to what evidence really is." Perhaps so: perhaps no. It is at any rate consolatory to find that this deficiency exists in a marked degree in those who—like our present critic—discover it in others. A man who learns that a photograph is to be seen and who goes off for two days to see it taken has no right to run about throwing stones at anybody on account of "deficiency of understanding."

For the rest we shall learn so much more in course of time that it is not worth while to say more than that the delegate of the London Spiritualist Alliance addressed the Congress at considerable length. I do not summarise his speech (which, I hope, we shall be able to reproduce in full) from the imaginative reporter's account. It is an odd jumble

—the report, I mean. When will a newspaper that thinks it worth while to devote considerable space—and that, by the way, is a sign of the times—to a subject little understood, think it also worth while to entrust the charge of it to people who know something about it, and who will not make their employers ridiculous by what they write? But Mr. Everitt, at any rate, told the assembly some facts. M. de Lermine presided in the Spiritualist section. M. Fauverty spoke of Spiritualism as a bond of brotherhood, and urged caution and care in observation and affirmation. M. Delanne, jun., a well-known electrician, seems (if the report may be trusted) to have maintained that Re-incarnation was a law of nature—life succeeding life. If this were true of matter, why not of spirit? I hope, in a parenthesis, the eminent electrician did not use this as an argument. Probably it is filtered through the reporter's mind, and comes out in "loose language." M. Léon Dilly avowed that Spiritualism, to be effective in the world, must be scientific, and that the neglect of scientific Spiritualism must impede the progress of science. Hypnotism he regarded as the door by which a knowledge of Spiritualism was entering the domain of science. M. Paulsen, a great manufacturer of Liège, spoke of the beneficent effect of Spiritualism on the degraded state of the mining population.

The Congress broke up after some rather heated discussions and some rather unfortunate decisions, assuming always that the report in the *Standard* is to be trusted. At the instance of Captain Volpi it endorsed certain conclusions of the Barcelona Congress, acclaiming Allan Kardec as the founder of Modern Spiritualism. That, of course, is historically untrue; and, in the face of the large number of Spiritualists in England, America, and our Colonies, it was a grave blunder to make any such claim. I await further information before saying more. The next mistake was made when the question of affirming the existence of a personal God was raised. There was no sort of necessity for a conclave of Spiritualists to touch the question at all. But, having been raised, it was a very grave blunder indeed to divide upon the question, and to refuse to affirm what nine out of ten of us believe in some form or other. The charge of Atheism is sure to be levelled against Spiritualism after this: and though personally I care nothing about terms of abuse, I feel that I have quite enough to do in fighting the battle without having the central issue complicated in this unnecessary fashion. It is pleasant to notice that mention was made of "the great work of religious restoration performed by Spiritualism." It is pleasant, too, to remark that M. Jules Lermine, who presided over the Congress, is a professed Materialist. He is a believer in the phenomena of Spiritualism, accepts their reality, but not the cause assigned them by Spiritualists. He lent his influence to the Congress in the interests of freedom of thought and speech. All honour to him.

Sir William Turner has delivered before the Anthropological Section of the British Association, lately in

session at Newcastle, a remarkable address on heredity. The question at large is not one with which I am here concerned. The question of Weismann, "How is it that a single cell of the body can contain within itself all the hereditary tendencies of the whole organism?" is not one, the answer to which, as a writer in the *Daily Telegraph* remarks, can easily be made intelligible. The short summary given in the article referred to perhaps puts the matter as concisely as may be:—

He believes that there is what he calls "a germ-plasm," which in greater or less portions is continuously transmitted from parent to offspring. It is this, of course, which secures the general and recognisable features that belong to a species or family. But in this continuous transmission the immediate debt which the child owes to its parent is but small. Some part, no doubt, of the inheritance which is thus passed on is active in every fresh individual, but quite as large a portion is reserved for the formation of the succeeding generation. Hence it is that we find some tendencies developing themselves in one generation which are absent in others, according as the inherited heirloom happens to be drawn upon by its temporary possessor, or hoarded for devolution to his successor. Here and there in a long line of descendants we come upon certain characteristic features, such as colour or peculiarities of form and disposition, leaping over two or three generations to re-appear in a fourth.

This, as is further pointed out, might easily land the physiologist in "something like blank denial of the principle of human responsibility." This danger is rectified, in communities where men congregate, by rough and ready expedients not yet outgrown, the rope, the guillotine, the prison cell. The time must come when enlightened men will see the clumsiness of these expedients. The worst use you can put a man to is to hang him. It is clumsy as an expedient, and not deterrent as a punishment. Already popular opinion has relegated to privacy what was the favourite spectacle of the men about town and fine ladies of a bygone age. Soon the death penalty will be abolished. Spiritualism will teach men that they have not done with their criminal when they have hung him by the neck till he is what they call dead. That which revolts us already will die when it is found to be delusive as well.

It is here that the interest for us of Sir W. Turner's address comes in. I quote the words from the leader already referred to:—

The physical aspect of the question, although of vast importance and interest, yet by no means covers the whole ground of man's nature, for in him we recognise the presence of an element beyond and above his animal framework. Man is also endowed with a spiritual nature. He possesses a conscious responsibility which enables him to control his animal nature, to exercise a discriminating power over his actions, and which places him on a far higher and altogether different platform from that occupied by the beasts which perish. The kind of evolution which we are to hope and strive for in him is the perfecting of this spiritual nature, so that the standard of the whole human race may be elevated and brought into more harmonious relation with that which is holy and divine.

We have had Mr. Alfred Wallace supplementing Darwin's materialistic theory by its necessary complement of a development of spirit. Here we have the materialistic doctrine of heredity placed by a similar supplement on a firmer basis. There is in man a physical nature with which, for it lies ready to their hands, men of science have largely dealt. There is in him a moral nature which has not undergone, so far as we can judge, any considerable development, or one at all commensurate with that of his body. But there is in him, too, a spiritual nature which has, perhaps, been even less considerably developed than the moral. The advance in spirituality has been little. It is something to have it recognised in a meeting of the Anthropological Section of the British Association that there is such a thing as spirit capable of being developed, and such a quality as spirituality as a resultant of that development.

HEAVEN REVISED.*

By "M.A. (Oxon.)"

Circumstances over which I have had no control—my own illness and prolonged absence from the editorial office—have delayed any notice of a remarkable pamphlet which has attracted much attention in America, and which would, under more favourable circumstances, have received prompt notice in these columns of a more extended character than that already given to it.

In her modest introduction Mrs. Duffey tells us that she did not think out her narrative. "I could not have known less of what was to be written had I been writing at the dictation of another. The ideas were not gathered from various sources, for at that time I had heard little and read less upon the subject of Spiritualism. . . . I was a convert of but a year. . . . During the entire period in which I was engaged on this writing—some three or four months—I lived and moved in a sort of dream. Nothing seemed real to me. I felt as though I had taken a mental anæsthetic. I finished the work one Saturday evening. On Sunday I spoke, as usual, before our Spiritual Society. On Monday morning I awoke for the first time my usual self." Mrs. Duffey thinks that she "wrote through unseen assistance," though she forces the idea on no one. Those of us who are familiar in their own persons with the way in which the influx of ideas from the unseen world is communicated to the receptive mind psychically fitted to receive and transmit them will have no difficulty in arriving at the conclusion that Mrs. Duffey was but the medium through whom these ideas were conveyed from an external source. The whole flavour of the little book is eminently characteristic of what we know as spirit teaching. It has been the marked resemblance of some ideas contained in this book to those which were taught to me that has primarily attracted me to it. As I read, I valued the teachings for their own sake.

A very rapid bird's-eye view of the narrative is all that I can now attempt. It is in the first person; the story of a soul that has passed through the change called death, and returns from that "bourne from which no traveller returns," as the poet vainly said, to chronicle its experiences so far as they may be translated into terms of our mundane thought. For as "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive" the glories of the spirit-land: as Paul, being caught up thither, "heard unspeakable words," so it is still. The dwellers in those realms of glory find no words in our poor tongue to translate to us their thoughts. The puny imagination of the denizen of earth cannot soar to the realities of Heaven. The distorted perspective of earth-life must be revised and reduced to due proportion amid the extended views that the ascended spirit enjoys.

Hers had been the commonplace story of life—toiling, suffering, loving, tempted at times to sin. Intellect had dominated affection, till the end came, and love seemed the sum and substance of life—all that made life worth living, or could redeem it from monotony. Wisdom and love are the paths that lead the soul upward, we are told, and of these the less steep and thorny is the avenue of the affections.

When the end came, it was in a peaceful sleep, from which (as so many spirits have said to me) she awoke refreshed and full of a sense of well-being, not knowing that she had passed the dark river till her attention was fixed on the discarded body which lay, gaunt and stark, upon the bed in the familiar attitude of death: the worn-out envelope of the soul no longer needed to correlate it with the physical surroundings of earth: the empty husk grizzled

* *Heaven Revised: A Narrative of Personal Experiences After the Change called Death.* By MRS. E. B. DUFFEY. (Chicago: Religious Philosophical Publishing House.) 101 pp.

and lined with care, wan and worn by trial and trouble in the interests of the soul that now stood triumphant by its side. It is the experience of many a soul before, but it has never been more graphically and pathetically told than in these simple pages.

She was in the spirit-land: but where, then, were the spirits? where the departed friends who should meet and receive the ascended soul? As she meditated and wondered she found herself—it is curious to notice how like this is, again, to what we learn of the movements of spirits and their travelling, as we should say, from place to place—she found herself on “a great plain which gently inclined towards a valley through which flowed a stream,” a scene strangely familiar but flooded with a glory not of earth. She was gliding along just above the surface of the ground—another touch of truth well known to me from communications made to myself—but still no spirit-friends appeared. She uttered no word, but wondered mutely. As if in response to the unspoken thought, two youths approached. Years ago she had laid away in sorrow of heart two children, and in these the subtle instinct of mother-love recognised her lost ones, now grown nearly to maturity.

Then her best beloved had met her, after all, as soon as she was sufficiently awake to bear the strain. Afterwards came the guardian, the spiritual mother, attracted by the affinity of a kindred spiritual nature and kindred earthly experiences. She had expiated her own life's troubles and errors on earth by tending this soul through its incarnation and helping her with her own experience. Now she spoke with her face to face, seen no longer as through a glass darkly, able to guide and to give reasons for the guidance. On her teaching I must not stay to dwell, it is entirely in consonance with what I myself have learned, even in its details.

“After death the judgment.” It came to this poor soul as it will come to all of us, not at a far distant day when the body shall have again clothed the soul that has laid it aside; not at the bar of God when the events of earth-life shall be recited as in a judicial charge; not in this way, but by the introspective flash which reveals the details of life's every act to the abashed soul sitting in judgment on itself.

After judgment the verdict and the sentence. The soul finds it in the place that it has prepared for itself, the “house not made with hands,” whose foundations have been laid in the acts of daily life, and whose walls are adorned by pictured scenes from its pages.

I hope to present hereafter to the readers of “LIGHT” some specimens of the succeeding chapters which are singularly like what is printed in my own books, especially in *Spirit Teachings* and in *Visions*. For the present I have endeavoured only to give some broad idea, all detail avoided, of the general teaching of this little book. The gospel that it preaches is that of pure unadulterated Spiritualism—pure in intent and outcome; unadulterated by any curious speculations which might mar its beautiful simplicity by the introduction of moot topics over which men fight, and from which they get scant gain. And who shall say that such teaching, once realised and acted on, would not redeem the race of man and turn this earth into a heaven? A life where love excludes the meaner passions and elevates each act by a motive that is divine; a life lived in the full realisation that the man is his own saviour, his own creator, his own judge, the arbiter of his future destinies, a blessing or a curse to his fellows, as it pleases him to elect; a life no longer spent in greedy rivalry for gold, in sensual indulgence, in envy, hatred, and uncharitableness, in the destruction of human existence or in its embitterment; who shall say that this ideal is not one that would suffice to turn this sad earth—so lovely in itself, so ineffably sad in the scars that

man has inflicted on it—into a veritable Eden, a garden of the Lord wherein righteousness would dwell?

It has been the glimpses—they are hardly more—which I have had of these promises of the higher Spiritualism that have made me content to rest my hopes of the future development of the race and the eventual amelioration of mankind more on their realisation and on their translation into the activities of daily life than on the grasping of subtle problems, which, however interesting they are to me personally, must always be the property of the few, and on the pursuit of curious speculations, which are, I believe, serviceable, but which, I opine, should be tackled not by the many but by the few, even as are the problems of our science. It is clear to me that we shall live again. I wish it were as clear to all how we may best live here so as to live again worthily.

FACTS AND SPIRITUALISM.

It is a truism that states: “Facts are only of use so long as they act as bases from which truths are deduced.” And in Spiritualism the facts are merely the foundation upon which reason bases certain arguments that tend to prove certain truths. These facts are numerous enough, and are open to all who have a few shillings to spend in purchasing some three or four small volumes, in which those facts are vouched for by men of trained ability as observers, as having occurred under their own observation. I mention Crookes's *Researches*, Zöllner's *Transcendental Physics*, *Spirit Identity* by “M.A.(Oxon.),” as among the number. These are the books that we recommend to beginners, in order to stimulate their interest, and to give them a true idea of what does, under the peculiar conditions of a physicalséance, occur. Now, surely there can be no Spiritualists who need facts such as these; surely there can be none avowedly devoted to any form of occult study that can in any way be themselves personally benefitted by the most positive and incontrovertible evidence of the levitation of a table, or, say, of a chair or piano. No good even can be derived by those who have once passed the Rubicon by the most perfect observation of the phenomenon of independent slate-writing. It seems inconceivable that any person calling himself a Spiritualist, Occultist, or any other “ist” of a similar or allied nature, should prefer the external manifestation to the idea that underlies it; should gaze hard at the shell and never give a thought to the kernel; should discuss and dispute about the exact method in which a communication is received, without giving a thought to its contents; nay, even refusing to consult them. Surely there cannot be amongst us men of that description; it must be that the cry for facts comes from inquirers, and persons who will not read, or having done so, are incredulous still, and hope the vain hope, that they may meet with some account or relation that will convince them. If what has been written by Zöllner, Crookes, and others is insufficient in the way of facts, I fear no amount of testimony will suffice, and the only remaining thing for the inquirer to do is to try personal experience, a very good recipe for which experiment is given in most numbers of “LIGHT” under the heading “Advice to Inquirers.” He will then, if he persevere, if he have patience, get facts for himself, and will have no need to be asking other people to lay bare for his inspection, and (as we know only too well) to expose to his scoffing, experiences that they look upon as sacred. Nay, he will not then be one of those before whom we are advised not to throw our pearls, but will have become a possessor of pearls of his own, and will feel as unwilling to expose to the vulgar gaze details of the holy intercourse that his patience and perseverance have enabled him to engage in, as any of those who now possess that which he lacks, and who themselves acquired their privilege by the same course that is here recommended to him.

The only thing that can convince a hardheaded man that he is not the subject of hallucinations is the repetition of phenomena until he becomes so used to them that they become what he might perhaps call natural. Well did Jesus say that if one rose from the dead the people would not believe. Only the other day a lady who had lost her husband remarked to me after a conversation on spiritual subjects, "What would I give to know that my dear husband lives, and that I shall live too, and see him?" My answer was, "Supposing he were to appear to you here, now, visibly; shake hands with you, even talk to you, what would you be likely to think of the matter this time to-morrow?" Her answer was, after a little thought, "I should consider that I had suffered from a hallucination." Thus the stupendous facts of the materialisation of a spirit, of that spirit having shaken hands and having spoken, would have produced no more effect than to have caused in the witness the belief that she was hallucinated. And so it would be with every demander of signs and wonders. They would merely stare in open-mouthed wonder and swallow the most egregious untruths; or would ridicule the whole matter as an idle tale.

Would that our friends would realise that the dead husks of the physical phenomena, and of the physical side of the communications, is starvation diet to the soul, and that that which giveth life is to be found only in the contents of the messages that are received. Especially is this latter the case in those circles in which the phenomenal evidence is avoided and the spiritual is striven for.

"1st M.B. (LOND.)"

THEOSOPHY AS AN AID TO REVOLUTION.*

Mr. Gilbert Elliot (writing, it is fair to say, in his own name only) states in the small pamphlet, the original and most important part of which is the Preface, that he writes "avowedly to attract the attention of Revolutionists," and he finds in the Theosophical Society a special form of brotherhood which, as far as we gather his meaning, may act as a solvent on the general form of brotherhood called society. The accession to the Theosophical Society of certain prominent Social Democrats inspires him with hope that his friends will listen patiently to teachings which, though they are Eastern in their origin, and altogether new to the great mass of Europeans, yet promise much more to accelerate and secure revolution than any of the methods of force or of political scheming, which have always failed, and must continue to fail, because they are met and defeated by Force Majeur, combined with the skill of political fence, which tyrannical power has gathered to itself through the long bad ages during which it has had humanity at its mercy, by reason of the dissensions which the infamy of the conditions of life have necessitated and preserved throughout the mass of the people of all countries.

Mr. Elliot is a very frank person. He is no believer either in existing religions or in existing systems, ethical or social. He dismisses the former on the question of results. What, he asks contemptuously, have they done for civilisation? We should require some space to answer that question. As to the rest, everything is for the worst in this worst of all possible worlds. Land tenure, Irish matters, commercial matters, law, all is bad. The remedy is Theosophy. Modern civilisation cannot endure. Go to the East, thou Western sluggard, and learn of her! Mildly suggesting that all the wise men do *not* come from the East, and that religion *has* done something for mankind that Mr. Gilbert Elliot's panacea has yet to improve on, that the Caucasian is not altogether played out, and that, finally, we want no revolution yet, we take a respectful farewell of this singular brochure.

* *An Introduction to Theosophy: With some remarks on the Theosophical Society.* By GILBERT ELLIOT, F.T.S. (London: G. Redway.)

MESSRS. FOOTE AND WHEELER ON MRS. BESANT.

In the *Freethinker* (September 8th), we find an article by Mr. J. M. Wheeler entitled "Revivals of Superstition." The new departure of Mrs. Besant has stirred Mr. Foote, and he has published a pamphlet *Mrs. Besant's Theosophy*, in which he attacks his friend, revives certain scandals connected with the Theosophical Society, and regards "Spiritualism on the one side and celibacy on the other as the evil angels of Theosophy."

Mr. Foote's tribute to Mrs. Besant shows the estimation in which that lady was held among those who knew her best:—

For a considerable time I have seen that Mrs. Besant was gradually drifting away from Secularism. I said nothing, because I had no right to, nor would it have been useful to do so. I was not in her confidence, so that I could not speak with her on the subject; and my conviction of the change which was coming over her was not grounded on anything that could be laid before the public; it was forced upon me by a hundred indications, as though a hundred fingers, at different times and places, all pointed in the same direction.

This conviction filled me with pain for many reasons. I admired Mrs. Besant's eloquence and abilities, and still more her generous and enthusiastic character. These are naturally of great service to whatever cause she espouses. She was also a woman; and that fact weighed even more heavily. There is no other lady of the first rank on the Freethought platform, and in the present transition state of society women are the best missionaries. Until both sexes take an equal part in public affairs, and in the promotion of principles, and while audiences chiefly consist of men, a lady speaker will exercise an influence quite out of proportion to her intellect and information; for difference of sex tells unconsciously, and from the lips of a woman, especially if young or engaging, even commonplaces are apt to pass with men as revelations, and faulty logic is wonderfully convincing.

But what I most admired in Mrs. Besant was her courage. I regard this as the supreme virtue, and by no means a simple one, for it includes many high qualities. Mrs. Besant is a brave as well as a good woman.

But though Mr. Foote is constrained to admit so much, he is not surprised at her sudden changes. She has not the gift of originality. She is at the mercy of her emotions, and especially of her latest friends. "A powerful engine, she runs on lines laid down for her." "At one leap she left Atheism and Materialism and plunged into the depths of the wildest Pantheism and Spiritualism." Not quite that; but no doubt the transition was rapid. How long the unsatisfying nature of the husk of Materialism from which the kernel of Spiritualism was absent had been felt we do not know.

But Mrs. Besant, says Mr. Foote, "remains quite positive amidst all her changes. It does not occur to her that a person who has been mistaken once may be mistaken twice or thrice." No doubt we may all be mistaken many times. No doubt change may be indicative of internal development and growth. No doubt also a fixed adherence to an unchanging set of ideas may be indicative of an obstinate mind and a hide-bound state. If Mr. Foote clings like a limpet to the rock, it may be because he has found the rock of truth—or it may not. If Mrs. Besant sees the necessity for spirit as a factor in her philosophical system, it may be that she is growing upwards to the light.

Be this as it may, Mr. Foote, from his immutable position, is evidently very much exercised as to what Mrs. Besant's erratic course may be. Having taken Theosophy on trust from "the most remarkable woman of the age," what is she going to do with it? Desirous of preventing any untoward success of Mrs. Besant's propaganda, Mr. Foote proceeds to attack Madame Blavatsky on familiar lines. We do not follow him. Most of his statements are beside the point, and some are not true. At best, this part of Mr. Foote's pamphlet is of the nature of abusing the plaintiff's attorney.

Nor is it any part of our business to attempt to reconcile Theosophy with Socialism, or to demonstrate the writer's ignorance of the essential characteristics of Spiritualism, or Spiritism, as he calls it. There is no necessary antagonism between these forms of thought, except in so far as Socialism may deny the existence of spirit, but there is considerable divergence in detail.

Mr. Wheeler's "Revivals of Superstition" contains nothing whatever that is new. His equipment for serious criticism of subjects that at least need attention before they can be understood may be gathered from one sentence. These things, he says in effect, are all crazes of the idle classes. "One season it is table-rapping, another mesmerism, another planchette, another *sympneumata* (!), another palmistry, another Theosophy." Hypnotism and Somnambulism are "two similar classes of disorder." This need not detain us. Foote's psychological analysis of Mrs. Besant was interesting; Wheeler's *réchauffé* is not.

MEDIUMS AND MONEY.

By DR. R. B. WESTBROOK.

FROM THE *Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

No. II.

Dr. Westbrook's article which we gave last week is thus noticed in the editorial columns :—

MEDIUMS AND MONEY.

Under this heading on another page our learned friend Dr. Westbrook does some very plain talking. We don't object to plain speaking; in fact, we rather think it the best method. But in considering so important a theme as mediums, and especially in co-ordinating therewith money, one needs to look at both sides in order to fully master the question. Mediums did not invent the vocation of mediumship; in very many cases they have been forced into it by the vociferous demands of acquaintances, when once the germs of medial power have been discovered. Drawn from the avocations incident to domestic life in order to gratify unceasing demands for exhibitions of medial power, women too poor to hire help to fill their places are driven from sheer necessity and self-preservation to adopt the calling as a vocation, and to exact a fee. They often deplore this necessity and would prefer to give their services freely when inspired to exercise their powers, and to be let alone at other times, but eager friends and a rapacious public render this impossible. That very many women, and men, too,—more is the shame—eagerly welcome the first feeble signs of mediumship because it promises a source of revenue, is true. Such persons always come to misery and disgrace in the long run, but their sins and weaknesses should not be shouldered on to the conscientious and altruistic class of mediums, and the distinction should always be made.

Some of the sweetest, purest, noblest, most self-sacrificing souls we have ever been blessed with knowing were or are following the vocation of public mediumship. Only that it might seem invidious we would gladly name these angels in disguise who are helping to make Heaven here and now; and doing their duty despite the wearisome, exhausting demands upon them and the keen sense of shame they feel at being classed with charlatans and dishonest mediums. God speed the day when the public, and especially the Spiritualist public, will intelligently and sharply discriminate these classes. Whatever of blame there may be—and it is much—for the opprobrium resting upon mediums as a class should be placed where it belongs, to wit :—(1) Upon Spiritualists themselves, and (2) upon idle curiosity-seekers and pelf-hunters who from unworthy motives seek mediums. Though in the last analysis it will be found that avarice and selfish ignorance with which the world is saturated is the primary cause in all this medium-hunting, medium-spoiling and pseudo-medium business.

We can name rich men, living in elegance, with wives who have nothing to do from morning until night, who will for an evening's diversion, or for purely business purposes, take their richly attired companion and seek some poor medium whose brain is reeling from exhaustion after a day passed almost wholly in the abnormal state of trance, and, against the protestations of the sensitive, insist on a séance. When all is over

and the rich sitter comes to pay the fee, he grudgingly offers a half dollar, with the remark: "You know I send you a great many customers, and my influence is worth a great deal to you. I ought not really to pay you anything, but I will give you half price." The poor medium is then expected to go into ecstasies of gratitude to the "influential" sitter, who, quite likely, never turned a dollar in her direction. This is no imaginary bit of writing, and some day we shall publish the names of these very respectable and "influential" citizens, most of whom belong to or affiliate with some popular church.

Dr. Westbrook suggests the purchase of sewing machines on the instalment plan, and says "there is always remunerative work for willing and skilful hands." That this assertion is too sweeping needs no argument to prove to those familiar with the condition of the working-classes; and, alas! even if wholly true, how rarely is a poor woman skilful at anything, how seldom has she had the least show of a chance to become skilful!

The Doctor also thinks few care to pay for attending the noisome gatherings where darkness and twaddle predominate. We wish from the bottom of our heart he was correct in this supposition. But, unfortunately for the welfare of true Spiritualism and for the good sense of the well-to-do class, such is not the case, to the extent it should be. People otherwise sensible and refined visit such psychic cesspools as Dr. Westbrook depicts, with eagerness. That little but evil can come from such gatherings every experienced person knows, and yet the demoralising farce goes on, and the patrons of it are responsible, not the medium. There is no law, moral or statutory, obliging them to attend, and without their support there would be no dark séance.

We sincerely wish mediums could live without taking toll from those to whom they minister; but the cold fact is they cannot, any more than can the "minister of the Gospel." "The labourer is worthy of his hire" was well said, and no one has a right to demand of another the exercise of psychic power without pay, any more than one has the right to demand physical services without reciprocating. That the world cries loudly for mediums and that the demand so far exceeds the supply as to make the opportunity for hordes of tricksters, is a notorious fact. The remedy for all this is more easily stated than applied.

We are not traversing Dr. Westbrook's statements as a whole; for, as a whole, we very largely agree therewith. Our aim is to portray correlative facts. We deprecate the existence of paid mediumship, as we do that of a paid ministry; but so long as the ministers of God must "teach for hire" the mediums of spirits must "divine for money." When that happy time shall come wherein all men have reached the devoutly-to-be-wished-for condition attained by our good friend Dr. Westbrook, and so well described by him in his closing sentence, then will there be no more need either for ministers or mediums.

MIND AND SOUL.

The *Family Herald* is not quite the place where we should expect to find sentiments such as these :—

We fear that our civilisation is too much a civilisation of the mind, and that we seek to ignore the life of the soul; but, although we may try to ignore the immortal essence, it asserts itself again and again; and not all the work of the mind, not all the counsels of calmness and caution, can prevent the irresistible soul from asserting its sway. Observe that the men who have been most influential on earth have not been those most remarkable for power of mind; they may have been ignorant, incapable of sustained thought, unfit to solve the pettiest problem which demanded acuteness of brain. But they had that something which passed all power of brain—they had an influence which did not work through words—they were far above all reasoners; and their Creator used them as instruments through the force of their souls. For ourselves, we do not think that the soul of man returns to the universal soul when mind and body have passed away. During the time when the essence makes itself manifest through the veil of the flesh, it must acquire certain individual characteristics; for it cannot be independent of its environment, though it may act independently of the mere body. We cannot believe that the real Gordon, the real George Fox, the real Cæsar, can ever become extinct; and we see every reason to think that the soul remains sentient and active after the brain has ceased to show those manifestations which we call mind.

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Light:

EDITED BY "M.A. (OXON.)"

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28th, 1889.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to the Editor.

THE GLOBE ON SPIRITUALISM.

The *Globe* has been addressing itself to a consideration of the relations between Spiritualism and Theosophy *apropos* of the Paris Congress and Colonel Olcott's return from Japan. It is desperately uninformative, and horribly misleading; but it is impossible to deny that it is not much worse than are some articles of the same type that occur elsewhere. It would seem that Editors who deal with these subjects put them into the hands of writers who succeed only in demonstrating their complete ignorance of the subject on which they are writing. Under such circumstances it may be asked whether it is worth while to pay any heed to such articles. Probably not. But it must be remembered that the average British public gets its ideas in this way, and it is well occasionally to protest against the mental pabulum on which the poor creature is fed. Such statements as those in the *Globe* would not deceive the veriest tyro in the study of the subject in any of its many branches, and can only raise a smile or an impatient shrug of the shoulders at the simplicity which gives them publicity. To talk of Spiritualism as the "religion chiefly associated in the popular mind with accordions played in the dark by invisible fingers and smart raps over the head with the lively tambourine" is to talk nonsense or worse. There are plenty of books in the extensive literature of the subject, which show that whatever the Spiritualist may think about religion he has, at any rate, evolved or received a coherent system which has no more to do with the phenomena that alone the *Globe* comprehends than it has with the teacups and saucers that the ordinary critic finds so funny in connection with Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Sinnett. But this is all poor stuff, standing out in marked and silly contrast to the treatment that the more intelligent portion of the Press have lately accorded us.

As if in ironical comment on the *Globe* and its religious accordions and theological tambourines we have the Paris correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* writing thus:—

The new religion which was ventilated during the recent International Congress of Spiritists and Spiritualists in Paris, has been lost sight of in the reports of the assembly, but it deserves a few lines as a novelty. It is a compound of Judaism and Christianity, and its apostle is a priest, the Abbé Rocca, who has been suspended by his Bishop as being heretical, but who, like Père Hyacinthe, insisted that he did not want to leave the real

true Church as it existed according to his own lights, and convictions. The Abbé appeared at the Congress in a semi-ecclesiastical costume, and while most of the speakers were curtailed, he was allowed full leave and licence to pound away with his exposition of doctrine, and his terrible fulminations against what he called the Vatican-Christ. According to the Abbé every man was an involuntary Christ, a deity in fact. There was a Christ-medium, St. Paul, St. Luke, and the Prophet Isaiah being also of that order. Spiritists, he contended, could well afford to adopt this religion of the general Christ, since it was in consonance with their doctrines.

We must have some more precise information as to the Abbé Rocca and his Medium-Christ and Vatican-Christ, his compound of Judaism and Christianity, before we pronounce any opinion on the merits of the case. It is one more proof that we live, as we have often said, in an age of reconstruction—in religion, in politics, in social life. All is changing and being recombined in new forms of activity. It is a bad time for the bats. They are being driven out of their crannies, out of congenial darkness into a glare of light where they "see men as trees walking." One must not be too hard on the *Globe* and such blind leaders. They may yet get a natural eyesight.

THE WESLEYAN METHODIST MAGAZINE AND THE SUPERNATURAL.

Spiritualism makes its appearance in many strange quarters, in none more unexpected than in the pages of the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*. In the current number of that periodical appears an article, "Notices of my Life and Times," by Benjamin Gregory, which is an autobiographical record of a Wesleyan minister who has already written, as he states, lives of his grandfather, his father, and his son. If he completes his own record he will have performed, we should fancy, a unique task. The present instalment is largely concerned with an incident which is thus narrated:—

At the Conference of 1820, my mother's father, a devoted Wesleyan Methodist minister, worn down by his three years' superintendence of the then large and laborious Boston circuit, had felt himself unequal, for the present, to the strain of the Itinerancy, and had obtained leave to seek, in partial and temporary retirement, the renewal of his strength. He settled at Spilsby, in the centre of a large circle of friends; and as he was but fifty-five years of age, was blessed with a robust constitution, and was withal comfortably circumstanced, having, in addition to his small annuity from "the Preachers' own 'Annuitant Society'" an income quite equal to his frugal habits, no doubt was entertained of his speedy restoration. He had no definite ailment, his symptoms were wholly those of exhaustion through overwork. But that had befallen him which comes to many who suddenly exchange varied and engrossing preoccupation for a comparatively monotonous leisure. He had sunk into a state of morbid depression. But this had happily passed away; he had regained his habitual brightness; and he was in an every way hopeful condition.

Such was his case when, at daybreak, on January the 4th, 1822, my mother lay awake with me, her babe of thirteen months, by her side; my father being away on one of his circuit-rounds. She heard the sound of fire-irons and of crockery as my eldest sister was preparing the breakfast in the room below. She was just about to rise, when suddenly the bedroom door opened and in walked her father, dressed just as he used to be when leaving home for District Meeting or for Conference. She started up, exclaiming: "O! father, whoever thought of seeing you?" He advanced to the bed and kissed her. She said: "I'll be down in a few minutes; you must wait your breakfast." "No, child," he replied,—his habitual mode of addressing his daughter,— "I must not stay; I am going a long journey, but I wanted to see you first." He bade her "Good-bye," kissed her and her babe, and walked out of the room. His appearance was so life-like that until he turned to go, no thought of the supernatural ever crossed her mind. She immediately rose, threw on her dress, hurried downstairs, and eagerly asked her daughter what her father said. She had seen no one. On hearing this, my mother fell into a deadly fainting-

fit, from which she was with difficulty brought back. On recovering, she was so alarmingly ill that it was necessary to fetch my father from the country place at which he was planned. A letter was at once despatched to Spilsby, anxiously inquiring as to my grandfather's health; but before an answer could arrive a letter was received announcing his death at the very hour at which my mother saw him.

This narrative, we gather from the criticisms of Mr. Gregory, was communicated to the *Society for Psychical Research*, published in *Phantasms of the Living*, and commented on by Mr. Innes in his review of that book in the *Nineteenth Century* for August, 1887, to which article the late Mr. E. Gurney made a rejoinder in the same magazine in the month of October following. Mr. Gregory's criticism occupies some eight pages, and he is equally dissatisfied, apparently, with the "cynical and off-hand" manner of Mr. Innes, in particular "with its air of scientific superiority," in the article in question, and the methods of criticism adopted by his school in general—"inveterate disbelievers whom no amount of evidence of which the subject is capable could possibly convince: inasmuch as by such experiences their favourite hypotheses are completely upset, their habits of thought and feeling unpleasantly interfered with, and their mental and spiritual economy disconcerted and disturbed; hence they hold out against evidence to the last gasp, like outlaws that expect no quarter: they fasten on any chance of cavilling against testimony, documentary or verbal: they insist upon the fulfilment of unfair and unlikely conditions: and, if they cannot make out the witness to be a fool, they do not hesitate to brand him as a liar." Mr. Gregory fitly disposes of Mr. Innes, after long and elaborate criticism, by this conclusion:—

In fine, no one who has the slightest respect for either himself or the subject would submit his case to Mr. Innes. Whatever may be his intellectual qualification for the task, his disqualifications, both ethical and mental, are obtrusive and decisive, especially his prejudice,—using that word in its original sense, prejudgment—his superciliousness, and his captiousness. In illustration of the last-named quality, I may mention his discrediting one deponent because his entry is "24-10-84," instead of *October 24th, 1884*. With one virtue, however—absolute impartiality—Mr. Innes must be fully credited. All "percipients" he treats alike. The ablest English Bishop of his age (Samuel Wilberforce) whose vigorous administration created an era in the history of the episcopate; the astute Lord Chancellor (Lord Brougham), mathematician, statesman, philanthropist, educationist, reformer; the devoted, simple-minded Methodist Chairman, along with literally hundreds of reputable people whose word is taken and acted on by their acquaintances, in practical matters, without demur, are all driven from the judgment-seat in superb Gallo style, as foisters of foundationless fictions on an omnivorous public.

This is just criticism. It is the prevalence of this radically vicious method of investigation which has shut out the orthodox scientists as well as the pseudo-scientists almost entirely from participation in these realms of discovery, the importance of which it is wholly impossible to over-estimate. The way in which *Phantasms of the Living* was compiled excluded many cases that were equally good with those elaborately verified and selected specimens therein included, yet it is not apparent that the methods employed have caused the book to be received with any greater acceptance by those men of science, the fear of whom was before the eyes of the compilers. Mr. Gregory alludes to the work in terms which we entirely agree with. We have never lost opportunity of expressing our sense of the value of the work so done as far as it goes, nor our regret that it has not gone further.

Notwithstanding the cavalier way in which these cases are treated, far less trustworthy testimony has been eagerly accepted by scientists with regard to alleged discoveries, supposed to countenance some favourite hypothesis, such as the immense antiquity of Man, or the doctrine of Evolution. Had the three collectors of these cases been able to lay before the public any-

thing like such a mass of data seeming to support the hypothesis of Evolution, they would have been voted by acclamation into the front rank of physiologists. Where, indeed, is to be found such a mass of *direct* evidence, as distinguished from *deduction*, inference, or analogy, in favour of Evolution, as is here brought together with regard to things which are not "dreamt of" by either our "philosophy" or our science?

THE PARIS CONGRESS.

The *Moniteur Spirite et Magnétique* (September 15th) has the following preliminary notice of the Spiritist Congress:—

The Congress of Paris was opened on Monday under the most happy auspices; a large crowd of delegates from all nations hurried thither, and gave great importance to the event.

We were able to make sure that for the future nothing ought to prevent us from openly proclaiming our convictions, for we are no longer a small battalion, but a strong and powerful army to be reckoned with as time advances.

Most of the political journals of Paris have given accounts of our meetings; they all agree that Spiritism is a majestic, imposing force, whose progress nothing henceforward can hinder; they recognise that we are desirous of seriously investigating a very serious matter, and they do so in terms of the highest praise.

The first meeting was opened by the temporary committee, Dr. Chazarain, president; MM. Arnould and Leymarie, vice-presidents; M. Papus, secretary. These informed the assembly as to the work that had been done; and then the permanent committee was constituted as follows:—

HONORARY PRESIDENTS—MM. Charles Fauverty, Eugène Nut, Baissac, Duchesse de Pomar.

PRESIDENT—M. Jules Lermina.

VICE-PRESIDENTS—M. Alexandre Delanne; Don Bernardo Alançon, Madrid; Mdle. Norlend, Stockholm; MM. Tulogio Horta, Cuba; Henry Lecroix; T. Everitt, England; Huet, The Hague; Leymarie.

SECRETARIES—MM. Camille Chaigneau, Papus, Gabriel Delanne; Leconte; O. Henrion; Laurent de Faget; Georges Moutière; Professor Hoffmann, Rome; Lecocq; E. Guillet.

Thirty-five members of the committee were chosen from among the delegates of Belgium, Italy, Spain, Germany, Sweden, Norway, Russia, the United States, South America, England, &c.

M. Jules Lermina, a highly distinguished and well-known writer, began by thanking the members for the honour they had done him. His discourse, full of vigour, subtlety, and warmth, was frequently cheered by the audience.

M. Léon Denis of Tours, among others, followed, and was much applauded.

The departmental sittings are held in the morning, the general assemblies in the evening. An account of the proceedings will be given when the Congress is over. For the moment it is sufficient to say that among the delegates from all countries, the Spaniards, the Italians, and the Belgians are the most numerous.

In conclusion, the Congress is not only a success, it is a triumph of Spiritism which will be hailed by all our friends.

A BISHOP ON SUPER-SCIENTIFIC TRUTHS.

The Bishop of Carlisle, who preached before a crowded congregation at Newcastle yesterday, said he knew no reason why a really philosophical, well-balanced mind should not find rest and satisfaction in being able to repose from time to time on the thought of a personal Creator and Governor who, while He manifested Himself in conjunction with much that was dark, mysterious, and incomprehensible, could be intelligently regarded as God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. There were such things as super-scientific truths. So far as their present knowledge extended, the England of to-day rested upon coal. Enormous vegetable deposits in an incalculably distant past were the coalfields and wealth of the present inhabitants of the world. Looking at the marvellous and mysterious operations of nature, the thought must suggest itself that there was some cause on which these operations rested. Creation with a God behind it he could at least understand; evolution he could accept as a working hypothesis. Physical laws, with a living Supreme Lawgiver, were comparatively simple things; but when he was asked to substitute evolution for creation, and to recognise physical laws not as the formula of Divine operation but as things which had life and power, he found himself stupefied with the suggestion.—*Fall Mall Gazette*.

A REMARKABLE SEANCE.

FROM THE *Banner of Light*.

Mr. E. A. Brackett, a very reliable gentleman, of Winchester, Mass., informs us that one of the most remarkable and convincing séances for materialisation he has ever attended was recently held on Rutland-street, Boston, Mrs. Hattie C. Stafford being the medium. He reports that there were some thirty ladies and gentlemen present, many of whom are widely known as finely-developed instruments for spirit manifestations, and none that had not previously had experience with the phenomena that occurred.

On his way to the séance Mr. Brackett purchased some flowers, the larger portion of which were placed in one paper to hand to Mr. Albro for the medium, the remainder in another paper which he concealed and was not known to have except by the gentleman who accompanied him, and who also was the only person cognisant of his placing them behind a mirror on a mantel in the séance-room, more than twenty feet from the cabinet. This was at the rear of the circle, a space of about eight feet intervening between it and the street windows.

Ten minutes after the forms began to emerge from the cabinet, those of the sitters near this space (it being quite light at that point) saw and heard the moving about of a large chair, which attracted their attention, and shortly beheld a white spot on the carpet, which slowly increased in size until a girl stood before them for a moment, and an opening being made in the circle, bounded out to greet a lady, who recognised and conversed with her.

Eight materialisations took place within this space at the rear of the circle, and at the distance from the cabinet mentioned above; but the one that interested Mr. Brackett most was the appearance of his niece, Bertha, in the manner above described. As soon as she attained full form she went to the mantel and took the roses from their concealment. Mr. B. says that as soon as she had done so, and before she had an opportunity to carry them to him, Mr. Albro approached her, and asked if she would not dematerialise just where she then was, telling her she might place the flowers on the mantel. She hesitated a moment, but being assured, in answer to her inquiry whether she could have the flowers again, that she might, she passed to the centre of the rear space, first leaning over one row of sitters, and saluting two young ladies in front. Several persons arose from their seats to view the dematerialisation (the light being very good), when the form gradually dissolved, until not a vestige of Bertha was visible. Then the chair began to move, and in a few minutes the white nucleus of her reappearance was seen on the carpet, and presently the full form of the beautiful and gleesome Bertha again stood before the company.

Another gentleman, who was seated very near where the above phenomena took place with Mr. Abbott Walker on his right and Mrs. Hattie C. Stafford on his left, informs us that simultaneous with Bertha's appearance another spirit-form arose from the carpet, and so close to his chair, that she pressed with considerable force against him.

Bertha having regained her roses, walked with Mr. Brackett across the room to his seat near the cabinet, saying, "Uncle, you thought I couldn't find the roses, but you see I did."

Mr. Brackett further states that when she reached him her hands were, to use his own words, "as cold and damp as if they had been bathed in ice water," and she said it was an extraordinary effort for her to do what she had done; that she desired to do all she could, though at one moment during her second materialisation she was on the point of giving up, but was reinforced by his drawing near and encouraging her to proceed.

One other incident which Mr. B. thinks should be mentioned. It is this: The flowers he had handed to Mr. Albro, the latter placed in a large vase, and put the vase on the mantel. One of the spirits who came, in visible form, at a point near where Bertha did, took this vase of flowers, crossed the room to where Mr. B. was seated, and, holding it before his face, said, "We all thank you for these beautiful flowers." She then returned the vase and flowers to the mantel.

In addition to the eight forms which materialised at the rear of the circle, a larger number did so at other points outside the cabinet, the process being seen, from beginning to close, by those near by—two descending from the top and one directly in front, six feet from it.

From these various points and within the cabinet seventy forms appeared—not mere dumb effigies, but active, living beings, for the most part recognised by those to whom they specially came and with whom they freely conversed, proving their individuality by what they said.

Mr. Brackett regards the appearance and disappearance of these forms—occurring as they do so far from the cabinet, entirely outside of the circle and under good light—as the most satisfactory demonstration of the kind he has ever witnessed.

Other gentlemen who have lately attended Mrs. Stafford's séances inform us that there is no question of the reality of her mediumship.

ONSET BAY MEETING.

In its report the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* thus writes of our friend Mr. J. J. Morse, and on another subject which, from all we hear, needs prompt attention from managers of such meetings. They seem to be attended by a set of people who prey on the credulity of the ignorant by bogus materialisations. There is no doubt ample scope at these huge gatherings, and the severest censorship should be exercised. We know nothing personally of the matter, but the accounts we receive are not pleasant reading:—

On Sunday, August 25th, J. J. Morse, of England, was with us for the last time for the present, under the auspices of the Ladies' Industrial Union. The past week he had been somewhat indisposed by overwork and bodily infirmities, but with due care and good nursing he was able to fill the engagement in a perfectly acceptable manner. I was present in the afternoon to listen to his lecture upon "God, Man, and Somebody Else." It occupied a full hour, the closest attention being given by the large audience.

At the conclusion of Mr. Morse's lecture, Mr. E. Gerry Brown, proprietor and publisher of the *Bunker Hill Times*, Boston, Mass., stepped forward, and in a short but telling speech congratulated Brother Morse upon the success of his four years' labour in the United States, commencing with and terminating upon the platform at Onset Bay Grove, also saying "that, at the suggestion of one of the directors, President Crockett had called upon some of your friends, and as a result they have manifested a desire to bid you God-speed in your chosen life-labour, by the slight token contained in this envelope, which please accept, and as a sentiment, may the balmy breezes of nature and heaven waft you and yours to your native clime, there to take up and carry forward your life work until you shall once more visit this, our happy country."

Mr. Morse responded as only he can do upon such occasions. Continued applause followed his remarks. Mr. Morse left Onset on the evening train to join his wife and daughter, who await him in New York, sailing on Thursday, the 29th, for Glasgow, Scotland, where he will commence work on the other side of the Atlantic.

It is pleasant to speak of the life work of noble-hearted men and women like the above, but there is another verse in this chapter not so pleasing to speak of, but, at the same time, demands a hearing. I refer to a class of beings in human form who infest Onset in particular to carry on their infernal work in the name of spiritual materialisation; not content with plying their art and obtaining their dollars, they will disgrace the platform Sunday after Sunday with their brassy faces for the audience to look upon. Words fail me to do the creatures justice, and I have selected the following from the *Boston Sunday Herald*, of August 25th, 1889:—

ONSET, August 24th, 1889.—The Spiritualistic war dance is nearly ended, and the braves and the squaws of the cabinet, together with their dupes, are leaving the place by the hundreds to wonder at their performances of the summer, and devise plans for another season of similar work. The materialising, the test, and the magnetic mediums are all leaving the place loaded down with Uncle Sam's medium, the almighty dollar, which they wrested from some unsophisticated countryman or alleged smart city man. The slate fiend has folded his tent and is ready to depart, after having written spirit messages at the rate of two dollars a slate. Another source of income which he has created is the demand of farmers for the slates. For these he charges a dollar, and you pay that and go away contented if you can. The mediums tell that this spirit writing is the work of some unseen power, and it would be an omen of ill-luck to part with the slate or even destroy the writing.

It is pleasing to say that some of the interested parties at Onset, who wish for its best and purest development, are getting their eyes open, and are realising something of the enormity of this crime that has been allowed to go unpunished at this place.

Onset, Mass., August 25th, 1889.

W. W. CURRIER.

COLONEL OLCOTT AND THE "PALL MALL GAZETTE."

The irrepressible interviewer that waits in Northumberland-street like a giant spider for its flies, with sundry excursions to seek them, has fastened on Colonel Olcott. A recent number (September 14th) gives the following account of what the President of the Theosophical Society had to say. His remarks are eminently worth attention from all who seek to know some reasons why the society has been so successful :—

Few things are more marvellous in this sublunary world than the extraordinary developments of religious enthusiasm. Among the freaks played by this element in human affairs there has seldom been anything more *bizarre* than that which sent Colonel Olcott, a shrewd New Yorker, who has come of New England Puritan stock and been reared in the Christian tradition, to traverse Japan and Ceylon as the emissary of the Buddhist faith, which he had learned in India at the feet of the Russian Madame Blavatsky. Colonel Olcott's tour in Japan seems to have been a great and entire success. The Land of the Rising Sun is at the present moment in a state of universal change and unrest. When Colonel Olcott was moved in the spirit to accept the invitation to proceed thither he found the Japanese Buddhists divided into eight sects, one of which possessed 23,000 temples, closely pressed by another which had 20,000, while the remaining six had 32,000 between them. Colonel Olcott's arrival in Japan was the signal for an extraordinary reunion of all these sects. Summoning all the chief priests of the Buddhist Churches, he informed them that unless they agreed to work together in forwarding his mission he would incontinently shake the dust off his feet and return to Madras. They listened attentively to his words, admitted that he had come to preach the essence of the faith in which they all believed in common, and there and then formed a joint committee which undertook to superintend Colonel Olcott's mission in Japan. In 107 days Colonel Olcott addressed no fewer than seventy-six meetings, each attended by no fewer than 2,500 persons. He traversed Japan from north to south, from east to west, speaking in thirty-three towns and travelling as the crow flies a distance of no fewer than 800 miles. Everywhere he was received with enthusiasm, and it seems not to have been without cause that a learned pundit exclaimed, "Colonel Olcott has been to Buddhism in Japan what the Apostle was to Christianity in the Mediterranean."

Colonel Olcott is now in this country, and begins a course of Theosophical propagandist lectures, at South-place Chapel on Tuesday next, under the auspices of Mrs. Besant, when he will discourse concerning the Work and Objects of the Theosophical Society. Before beginning his lectures in England he came down to the *Pall Mall Gazette* office and expounded the true Theosophical faith to an attentive auditor, who, with all diffidence, ventures to make the following rough summary of the apostolic discourse :—

"Now, Colonel Olcott," said our representative, as the Buddhist apostle composed himself in an armchair, "are you going to be Theosophist or Buddhist propagandist in this country?"

"Theosophist," said he. "I preach Buddhism in Buddhist countries. Theosophists are of all creeds. They are men and women whose minds are open to the Higher Soul—what Christians call the Holy Ghost. Some men are born blind to this divine light. They cannot see. It is in many a congenital lack. Materialism is often a mere result of cerebral malformation. All men whose minds lie open to the spiritual intelligence, whose rays stream through and influence the material intelligence, are born Theosophists."

"It is the latest form of phrasing the old Calvinistic doctrine of election and reprobation; but what are the Ten Commandments of Theosophy?"

Colonel Olcott looked shocked. "We formulate no creed. We no more inquire into the religious belief of a member than we do into the diet that he prefers to assuage his hunger. We have in our ranks a Christian Bishop, Buddhists, Hindus, and Parsis without end, Jews, and even many Mahomedan mollahs."

"What, then, are you driving at? What are your leading principles? What is your gospel for the world?"

"The first object of the Theosophical Society is to form a nucleus of human brotherhood which has as its central basis and foundation the one supreme article of our faith—the absolute and essential unity of the human race."

"There is no man but one, and Madame Blavatsky is his prophet." This was the flippant paraphrase of the formula of Islam that passed through the mind of the interviewer; but he said nothing, and Colonel Olcott went on.

"The essential human Ego, the individual essence, which is the centre of life, the soul, that which alone really exists, is one. All circumstances and environments are mere outside wrappings. They vary endlessly. Skin, race, constitution, civilisation, sex, all these are but accidental and transitory. They are but as clothes concealing the wearer, disguising him beyond all similitude. Our material bodies are merely clothes. We seek to penetrate through all these things, and pierce to the unclothed Ego, which is everywhere and always one. Creeds and bodies are alike but as the peelings of the onion to the soul. Looking through all these, we proclaim the eternal and immutable and absolute unity and brotherhood of every soul with every other soul that has existed or that will exist."

"Brotherhood, you say. Does that include sisterhood?"

"The spirit is sexless. Sex is the result of the 'fall into generation.' The differentiation of sex is the result of the materialisation of the functions of the androgynous original soul. But for this fall, due to the attempt to multiply the race by material means, man would have continued to be mind-born. All progress is towards the extinction of the evil result of the fall. In the future existence Buddhists believe we pass first through a state in which the passions survive; then to a second stage, where the bodies exist without the passions; and it is not until we pass into the third stage, when the bodily organs disappear, that the results of the fall are worked out."

"To return to your society. What does this Universal Brotherhood do?"

"It is in its essence altruist and religious, and seeks to unite mankind in brotherhood, tolerance, and mutual help in overcoming ignorance, which is the supreme sin and the cause of all sins. The Millennium will dawn when wisdom is universal."

"And in what way do you combat ignorance?"

"By assisting all men everywhere to study the vast storehouse of Aryan literature and philosophy, together with all the accumulated experience of the ancients. It is amazing how much these ancient sages anticipated of the learning and science of our time. There is no form of modern philosophy, and very few of the latest developments of modern science, that have not been anticipated. In the survey of the Infinite the human mind seems to pass through ceaseless cycles. We seek to render universally accessible the recorded results of the work of the human mind in all ages, to enable all men to behold all the rays of the higher spiritual intelligence which since the world began have penetrated the material intelligence of our race. Anthropologists, philologists, and all scientific students of the literature and history of our race, are pursuing this question. We seek to place it on a religious basis. Theosophy is primarily religious, though not sectarian in the smallest degree. It is the bridge which in these latter days unites science and religion, the new and real Catholic religion of the human soul."

"FRATERNITAS."

We have received a prospectus announcing the formation of a society under the above title. The announcement is signed by Countess Wachmeister, Dr. Franz Hartmann, Dr. R. Thurman, and Dr. A. Pioda.

This society, which is really a limited liability company, is to possess a capital of 50,000 francs, in shares of 500 francs each. As soon as the capital is subscribed, the *ad interim* committee promises to build a house or chalet on a piece of land offered by Dr. Pioda, and to furnish it in a simple but convenient way.

The house is intended as a pleasant and healthy retreat, or place of meeting, for Theosophists and Occultists, which it may well be, situated, as it will be, on a hill overlooking Lago Maggiore.

At the same time, the society or company is to be formed on strictly business principles, and this should ensure a success which pure sentiment alone will not secure.

There are to be a library, gardens, and so forth. The house is to be open all the year, and the tariff is to be moderate. One pleasant characteristic is the intention of devoting any surplus profits to the entertainment of those who, interested in occult subjects, are yet pecuniarily unable to take shares in the undertaking.

The bankers are the "Banca Cantonale Ticinese" (Canton Tessin), and applications for shares should be made to the Secrétaire du Comité, à Locarno, Suisse, not later than December 31st.

PROFESSOR GAIRDNER ON DREAMS.

Professor W. T. Gairdner, of Glasgow University, writing to the *Spectator* on this subject, says he is tempted to make a few comments on "Dreams," in the hope of their leading to the publication, possibly, of further records of experience on a very curious and interesting theme:—

I am not by any means habitually "a dreamer of dreams," rather the contrary; but in early manhood (1845), I happened to be attacked with very severe typhus fever, which has left some very vivid reminiscences, never to be obliterated while memory lasts, and a few of these may, perhaps, be of some value as illustrating dreamland. One peculiarity of these random recollections (concerning which, if I were Mr. Andrew Lang or Mr. Rider Haggard, I could with ease indite whole volumes) is that, from the first occurrence of delirium on the fourth day up to what, I suppose, was the crisis of the fever, the world of shadows in which I lived was utterly confused, distracting, nightmare-like, and even horrible, but still more, if possible, a world of fruitless and thwarted effort to compass what appeared to be, or suddenly to become, impossibilities to the dreamer. He was away on duty and could not get anything properly done; he was seeking to get somewhere, most commonly homeward, and could by no means manage it; foul-mouthed hags and horrible creatures waylaid him at every corner, and thwarted him in every effort; his purse was always missing when wanted, and he was in a foreign land with no command of the language, no knowledge of the currency (I had never been abroad at this time, so this was absolutely pure imagination); he was dead; he was being dissected; he was confined and let down into the grave; all within his own mental vision and with a keen sense of reality, but without the amount of horror and disgust that might have been expected. Finally, the last trumpet was sounded, and—just then, if I remember rightly, must have come about what I call the crisis. For, after just that moment everything seemed to change, and all was delightful and even ecstatic. Everything now went smoothly, and not only were bodily needs well supplied, but as regards the mind also there seemed to be a well-spring of "pleasures for evermore." In the earlier days of convalescence this state seemed to settle into a condition somewhat like that of your anonymous "historian of the last generation," in respect that the dreamer—or day-dreamer, if you will—seemed to have an almost unlimited power of regulating and directing his own visions of bliss. It was only necessary for him to compose himself as if to sleep, and in a very short time he seemed to be able to transport himself anywhere, and to lay the foundation of any number of pleasant romances, in any country, or among any people, and with a marvellous sense of reality in detail, though not without an inner or latent consciousness that, after all, these excursions were only visions, and that they could be continued or interrupted at will. But what proves, more than anything else, that this state of intermediate consciousness (call it what you will) was not quite withdrawn from the waking world and from reality, and even logical coherence of thought and suggestion, is the following (to me strange and unique) experience:—At the time of falling ill with typhus, I was just entering on the last winter of medical study, and had my mind full to overflowing of half thought-out materials for my graduation-essay or thesis, which, by a curious coincidence, was arranged to be upon "Death," physical death, of course, being understood. I was also hard at work both in dispensary and hospital, in the midst of a gathering epidemic of fever. All the views, from Bichat down to Alison, of somatic death, had been carefully read and thought about; certain difficult points had been presented for inquiry and certain experiments had been either performed or planned. (I forget which at this moment.) The introductory chapter of my thesis, at least, had been so far in mind as to have been in part thought out (though not a line of it was written), even as regards the form; and it was to this that the mind of the dreamer instantly reverted the moment that his logical faculty was set free from the confusions of febrile delirium. Now, it is simply a fact that I actually believe I composed—even as regards the wording of a good deal of it—the introductory chapter of my thesis during the pleasant after-time or ground-swell of imaginative activity, above described as succeeding the period of febrile delirium: a delirium which, according to good medical testimony afterwards, carefully connoted, was so extreme, and a coma thereafter so deep, that my death was looked for as probably instant—even as a question of half-hours. I cannot, of

course, give dates, or even approximate facts to show how long this state continued; but I am quite assured, even at this distance of time, that the condition of voluntary day (or night) dreaming above referred to, alternated closely with states in which my mind was fully occupied with the arrangement, and even the very wording of this introductory chapter; and that it actually assumed a shape tolerably complete to my own mind almost in the midst of the remains of the state referred to. I have not happened to hear of any incident quite similar to this, in the course of a pretty long experience.

VISIONS OF THE NIGHT.

When anything takes hold on the public imagination it almost necessarily results that impressionable people dream dreams and see visions bearing on the subject. The horrors associated with Whitechapel have stirred the public mind, and the *St. James's Gazette* gives a batch of dreams which are more coherent than what is usually published on such occasions. The account must be discounted, but it is distinctly curious:—

Mr. T. Ross Scott, residing at 26, Queen's-crescent, which is situated in one of the fashionable suburbs of Edinburgh, has given publicity to a peculiar dream which he had on Tuesday morning of the Whitechapel murderer, and says that is the third occasion on which the same figure has presented itself to him in his dreams, and it has accordingly made a deep impression upon him. He says:—"While residing at Burntisland during the month of July, two of my remarkable dreams took place. The first occasion on which I saw the vision was during the night of Thursday, July 4th. The figure was standing in what appeared to me to be a small dispensary; but I was unable to note any of the details, because the man, whom I supposed to be the ship's surgeon, had his eyes fixed on me, and I seemed quite powerless to withdraw mine from his gaze. Just then, however, I awoke, and my dream came to an end. About a fortnight afterwards, on the morning of the eighth murder, the vision again appeared to me." Mr. Scott afterwards had his attention drawn to the *Mirror* of July 29th, in which the editor (Mr. Stuart Cumberland) gave an account of a vision in which the face of a man claiming to be the author of the murders presented itself. Upon opening the paper Mr. Scott instantly recognised the portrait as being that of the man he had seen in his dreams. With the exception of the colour of the moustache the description tallied in every respect. Since then it had been reported in the *Mirror* that the vision of the same face had appeared to a lady, and that that lady had subsequently seen the man of her dreams sitting in a fashionable London church during evening service. Mr. Scott gives the following account of his dream on Tuesday morning:—"Retired to bed at 1.30 this morning, but for a long while lay quite awake. The last thing I remember was looking at my watch, the hands of which pointed to five minutes to three. I then fell asleep. Gradually buildings seemed to rise on every side, and I appeared to be walking along a somewhat broad street, the features of which, however, I was unable to see distinctly, owing to the darkness of the night. While proceeding on my way I became conscious of the presence of someone, and, glancing up, observed a tall, dark figure rapidly approaching me. In his right hand the stranger held a large carpet bag, which apparently he had considerable difficulty in carrying. As he passed he turned his head towards me, and I immediately recognised him as the 'surgeon' of my two previous dreams. In vain I tried to reach him; he again had his eyes fixed on me; I was totally unable to move. Just then I awoke, struggling violently and completely exhausted. The time by my watch was eleven minutes past five."

THERE will be often, and often appear to be, danger from removing a mistake, the danger that those who have been long used to act rightly from erroneous principles may fail of the desired conclusion when undeceived. In such cases it requires a thorough love of truth, and a firm reliance on divine support, to adhere steadily to the straight course. If we give way to a dread of danger from the inculcation of any truth, we manifest a want of faith. There may be danger attendant on every truth, since there is none that may not be perverted by some, or that may not give offence to others, but in case of anything which plainly appears to be truth, every danger must be braved. We must maintain the truth, and trust to Him who is the Truth, to prosper and defend it.—ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

"Colenso" and Theosophy.

SIR,—Kindly permit me to disclaim the meanings and intentions which your correspondent "Colenso" (see "LIGHT," July 27th) has seen fit to read into my letter in "LIGHT" of July 6th.

I desire to say that I did not state and had no intention of intimating that "the bulk of the Theosophical Society had broken away from Occultism" (whatever that may mean). Neither did I state or hint that the Masters, or any of them, had "thrown over Madame Blavatsky," nor that the Theosophists or the Theosophical Society had done so. To imagine such things possible shows a curious ignorance of our Society and of its connection with the Theosophical movement.

If some one were to write to you that the Royal Engineers were "not the whole of the British Army," what would be thought of a correspondent who thereupon raised the cry in your columns that the Engineers had been abolished in the British Army and the Commanding Officer cashiered? And still, if the matter be regarded for a moment without prejudice, this conclusion would not be a less warrantable one to draw from the premises than that which "Colenso" extracts from my harmless statement that the Esoteric Section "is not the whole of the Theosophical Society."

As I understand the matter, Occultism is for the few; Theosophy for all. Of the latter, the idea of the Brotherhood of Man and of Nations is the backbone. To understand this idea, and to appreciate it, it is not necessary to become a member of the Esoteric Section; neither is any "authority," other than one's own reason and intuition, required to enforce it; nor would any "phenomena" make it more easy of acceptance.

We Theosophists were told some years ago that the Masters wish Theosophy to stand on its own merits as a system of Philosophy and Ethics. It is for that reason, not from any "giving up" of the Masters, that I and a great many other Theosophists do not care to parade their names in public, or mention them unnecessarily to ignorant cavillers. It is for that reason also that writers like "Colenso" seem to us to wander off in the wrong direction, and to be fighting with fancies of their own creating.

RICHARD HARTE
(Acting Editor *Theosophist*).

Theosophist Office, Adyar, Madras.
September 1st, 1889.

Kindly Words from New Zealand.

SIR,—The enclosed lines have been in my possession for some time. Hitherto I have hesitated to give them publication. However, as one who has thought the matter out for himself, I am, after a careful survey of what appeared to me as facts, convinced that evolution proceeds from and through the soul force of nature; that the life principle can and does adapt itself to all forms, whether as regards what is called inanimate matter, which has inherent in its molecules the principle of life, or the higher form, as possessed by plants, and the still higher, that manifests consciousness. Equally does it adapt itself to those forms that manifest reasoning consciousness, and the still higher, that manifest questioning, reasoning consciousness, as exemplified in man, the highest production of nature known to us in a materialised form. In May 25th number of "LIGHT" I read the Easter address of the Rev. J. M. Savage, which was to me a most pleasant and agreeable surprise; that seemed to be an echo of my own thoughts. That decided me to forward the enclosed production. The terminology of what I have written may not be up to your standard, but it has at least the merit of being the honest conviction of one who has lived in the wilds of New Zealand for some thirty years, and who by careful study of his surroundings could arrive at no other conclusion and was rejoiced to see that he does not stand alone. If it does not suit your columns, its non-appearance will be a sufficient answer. Whilst writing, I would like to state that I read "LIGHT" with pleasure and profit, such as any language I could use would fail sufficiently to express. I would much like to sometimes contribute, but my isolated position, with the distance combined, acts as a deterrent.

Gisborne, New Zealand, 1889. JOSEPH SANDLAW.

[Thank you. The spirit of your lines, which we do not print as not quite suitable to our columns, is in advance of their form. We cordially reciprocate your kindly words and are pleased to find "LIGHT" appreciated in your far distant country as it is in many others.—ED. OF "LIGHT."]

The Discovery of Crime Through Mediumship.

SIR,—I am afraid that I and Mr. Robinson are moving on divergent paths. My contention is that the same evil spirit which prompts a man to commit a crime is quite capable of inspiring thousands of people to believe in his innocence.

I did not deprecate submission to spiritual guardianship and guidance. On the contrary, I encourage and advocate it; but I make it a condition of this submission that there shall be no doubt of the truth and goodness of the inspiring agency and ministrations.

If hallucination is equivalent to delusion, I do not see why Spiritualists should be more exempt from hallucination than any other persons. The probability is that, from their impressionable character, Spiritualists are really more liable to be misdirected by fanciful impulses and visionary influences than many other more materialistic people.

I know no order of human beings who more need training, cultivation, discipline, virtue, vigilance, experience, common-sense, and wisdom than Spiritualists. All their faculties ought to be adjusted to the finest balance and nicest proportion. Perhaps we are never more liable to hallucination than when we imagine ourselves least under its spell; and the more confidently we presume upon the soundness of our moral and mental armour, the less do we notice the weakness of the joints where it may be pierced.

London, September 23rd, 1889. NEWTON CROSLAND.

How is a Spirit Rap Produced?

SIR,—With reference to the letter inserted in "LIGHT," for September 14th, under the above heading, perhaps the following narration may prove interesting and suggestive.

It is scarcely likely that any investigator into Spiritualism, however learned he may be scientifically or as a philosopher, will be able, whilst in the body, to fathom the deeply intricate and mystical laws of mediumship. The "things of the spirit" are infinite in wonder, and therefore quite beyond the power of the finite mind to grasp.

The two incidents I will now relate seem to prove pretty conclusively that the power used by the spirits to produce every form of mediumship is the same in kind, but differing in degree, whether it be called Electricity, Mesmerism, Life Force, or Psychic Force.

The first incident, which has direct reference to the production of spirit raps or knocks, I sent to the *Spiritualist*; it was inserted in the number for March 2nd, 1877, but will probably be new to the majority of the readers of "LIGHT" for 1889. I copy it as it there stands.

"Some years ago, when the Davenport Brothers were in London, a friend went to one of their séances, accompanied by a 'seeing medium' (I believe it was Miss Godfrey) and a 'sceptical investigator.' As soon as the Brothers were fastened in the cabinet, and the doors closed, the sceptical gentleman rushed forward, whether to open the doors, or to be sure they were closed, I cannot remember. Anyhow, he was close by the doors, of the cabinet, underneath the aperture in the upper part of the doors through which spirit hands used to project. As he was standing there, my friend—as well as the seeing medium who was sitting by her side—saw a long spirit hand and arm thrust itself out of this aperture, and from the finger tips were flowing streams apparently of electric sparks, which fell directly upon the head of the sceptical gentleman. He did not see the spirit hand, but on his return to my friend, said, 'I have had a good hard knock on my head! So, in this case, it is pretty certain that the knock came to him by the means of these electric sparks.'"

The second incident took place when I was sitting *en séance* with the same friend, who was hoping to have a message through my writing mediumship, and is perhaps conclusive evidence that the spiritual power which is used for *writing* is identical in kind with that which brings *healing*.

My friend was suffering much from inflammation of the eyes, which were very red and painful. I was sitting by her side with my left hand in hers, whilst my right hand held the pencil over the paper upon which we hoped to receive some communication from our spirit friends.

In a few minutes this pencil was thrown down, and the hand, without volition of my own, raised up and held—with the fingers spread out—over my friend's eyes, for an incredibly short time; perhaps half a minute, but certainly no longer.

During that short time, I felt a strong, tingling current of mesmeric power streaming through my hand to the tip of every

finger. (In all probability had a seer been present these streams would have been seen acting exactly as the streams of electricity which passed over the head of the sceptical friend as he stood under the aperture of the Davenport Brothers' cabinet, as related above.) It ceased suddenly, and simultaneously the hand fell powerless by my side.

My friend exclaimed in astonishment, "Why! my eyes are well!"

And, sure enough, the redness was gone, the pain ceased, and they were entirely restored to their normal and healthful condition.

The inflammation had been troubling my friend for some weeks previously, but the cure thus rapidly effected proved permanent.

When I resumed the pencil there was no influence for writing, and we could not receive one word.*

Doubtless, such evidence as this could be multiplied almost *ad infinitum*, and it would be very interesting, as well as instructive, if all who can would give publicity to their experiences. Such corroborations gathered from the many private séances held in the quiet seclusion of family life would probably bring fuller conviction to recent investigators into the marvellous subject of Modern Spiritualism, than similar occurrences at promiscuous séances, and through public mediumship.

Blackheath, S.E.

F. J. THEOBALD.

Alleged Photographs of Spirits.

SIR,—Will you permit me to call the attention of your readers to a matter which is, I think, of some importance? A shopkeeper in the Strand has exposed in his window some cabinet photographs intended to represent a medium and spirits. A correspondent of the *Two Worlds* has this week called attention to these pictures and the question is raised by the editor of that paper as to whether they are genuine, and as from inquiry I discovered that these photos are fraudulent productions, I think it only right that this fact should be made well known amongst those interested in Spiritualism. Some few months back I saw these pictures in the window of Browning's shop, 63, Strand (between Charing Cross and Wellington-street, on the same side of the way as Somerset House), and they were represented to be "spirit photographs," and priced at 2s. each. I went inside and questioned the shopkeeper as to the genuineness of the pictures, when, after a good deal of fencing, he admitted that they were not spirit photographs, "because," said he, "there are no spirits." In this belief (or rather, perhaps, disbelief) he apparently finds a justification for deluding the public, and as he persists in it, I wish to suggest that you should caution your readers as far as possible.

September 20th, 1889.

C. E. JOHNSON.

[The photographs in question are obvious shams, such as are some in our possession, put forth by the Stereoscopic Company, Regent-street, when the subject of spirit-photography was mooted a long time ago. These latter were not at any time alleged to be genuine, but were published in order to show how such pictures as Spiritualists believed to be genuine could be imitated. Mr. Browning has taken advantage of the interest excited by Captain Volpi's photographs at the Paris Congress: that is all. We have seen these photographs of Mr. Browning's. They would deceive no Spiritualist who had seen the genuine article. The paper on Spirit Photographs in *Human Nature* (a chapter in "M.A. (Oxon's.)" *Researches*) fully deals with the way in which these sham photographs may be manufactured.—ED. OF "LIGHT."]

SOCIETY WORK.

MARYLBONE LYCEUM, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—The Lyceum was opened on Sunday by the Conductor. Reading on "Conscience," from the *Medium*, and also from *Spiritualism for the Young*. Musical reading, calisthenics and marching groups, recitation by Lizzie Mason.—C. WHITE, 75, Balcombe-street, Dorset-square, N.W.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—Mr. W. E. Walker gave two addresses on Sunday last, with descriptions of spirits at the close of each meeting. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mr. W. E. Long and friends; children at 3 p.m.; and Mr. Parker and friends at 6.30 p.m. In aid of the organ fund a *soirée* will be held on Tuesday, October 1st, at 8 p.m. Tickets 6d. each, to be obtained from the Secretary, 99, Hill-street, Peckham.

ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BEAUMONT-STREET, MILE END.—We had a very attentive audience for the first meeting in our new hall. Mr. Emms spoke on "Secularism, Spiritualism, and Christianity." Miss Marsh also gave some very good clairvoyant descriptions which were readily recognised. On Sunday next at seven, Mr. Rodgers. Will any friends who are willing to assist either by presenting literature for distribution or by giving addresses, kindly write to MR. MARSH, 218, Jubilee-street, Mile End, E.?

* See *Homes and Work in the Future Life*, p. 120.

PECKHAM RYE.—On Sunday, the 15th inst, the meeting was disturbed and violence used. Three of the most prominent disturbers were charged and taken to the police-station, where they were freed with a caution. The crisis seems to have passed, and we shall now hold our own. We had an immense gathering on Sunday last. Mr. R. J. Lees quoted from records of *Visions, &c., &c.*, compiled by a clergyman of the Church of England, and showing on every side evidences of spirit presence. Mr. J. Humphries also spoke. Next Sunday at 3 p.m.—J. T. AUDY.

KING'S CROSS, 253, PENTONVILLE-HILL.—Last Sunday, instead of the ordinary discussion, we had an autobiographical address from Mr. Hopcroft, the well-known medium, which was greatly enhanced by the genial manner of his delivery, revealing more than the lecturer imagined. He produced unimpeachable testimony of the truth of his mediumship, but his manner made a deeper impression, convincing all his hearers that he himself is a simple, truthful, pure-minded man. A hearty vote of thanks was given to the lecturer. I can personally vouch for Mr. Hopcroft's exceedingly good clairvoyant gifts. As I am resigning the secretaryship of this branch of the Spiritualistic Association, I request that in future all communications be made to Sam. Rodger, Esq., 107, Caledonian-road.—J. BOWLES DALY, Hon. Sec.

ZEPHYR HALL, 9, BEDFORD-GARDENS, SILVER-STREET, NOTTING HILL GATE.—The flower service and harvest thanksgiving was held last Sunday evening and was a great success, the hall being crowded. It was decorated with flowers, fruit, corn, &c. The chair was taken by Mr. W. O. Drake, and the speakers, Mr. Treadwell, Mr. J. Hopcroft, Mr. Earl, and others gave suitable addresses, which were greatly appreciated. Messrs. Drake and Hopcroft in their remarks showed that every Spiritualist ought to frankly acknowledge his cause. Some clairvoyant descriptions were given by Mr. Treadwell.—The open-air work was referred to, and notice was taken of the great good that had been done and the enormous amount of Spiritualistic literature that had been distributed, the results of which we shall look forward to during the coming winter. We were extremely sorry to have to give notice that these meetings (held close to the Marble Arch) were discontinued from Sunday last, 22nd inst., when we had a very good meeting. Mr. Rodgers was one of the speakers, and answered numerous questions. Our friend, Mr. Drake, has worked hard at these meetings, and will now require rest. Marziel's extremely pretty duet, "Friendship," was sung by Percy Smyth and Mr. J. H. Brooks, and was well appreciated. A vote of thanks to those who had so kindly assisted in the decorations was proposed, seconded, and carried unanimously. Next Sunday evening at seven we hope to have Dr. Nichols's services as speaker. The Kensington and Notting Hill Spiritualist Association are open to receive persons as members on payment of a subscription.—PERCY SMYTH, Hon. Sec.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

The Fate of the Dead. By THOMAS CLARKE, M.D. (Williams and Norgate.) Price 1s. 6d. [An attempt to answer on the lines of Christian Revelation questions involving the possibility of the survival of the spirit after death; the state in which it exists, if at all, after death; and its ultimate fate.]

The Faiths, Facts, and Frauds of Religious History. By MRS. HARDINGE BRITTEN. (Heywood, Manchester and London.) Price 3s. [First published during the author's Australian tour, at Melbourne, in 1878; intended chiefly to substantiate statements made by her in the course of a series of lectures on the origin and development of ancient religious faiths. The little work (128 pp.) had a very large circulation in the colonies, and is now republished from the Australian edition.]

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

X.—Our advice to inquirers and rules for the conduct of circles will give you what you want. If any point of difficulty arises we will advise with pleasure.

W.M.—All information can be had at our offices. See notice on p. 455 of "LIGHT." It is very inconvenient to mix up in the same letter matter that concerns both Editor and Manager or Publisher.

R.G.—It is impossible to give an opinion in such a case. On the first page of "LIGHT" you will find addresses of some suitable persons whom you might consult. Mr. Omerin has been very successful in some cases within our knowledge.

D. A.—An answer shall be sent through the post as soon as time and engagements permit. Meantime, in brief reply to your queries: (1) We have repeatedly had messages purporting to come from our own departed friends, so characteristic in form and containing matter of such a private and intimate nature that it is impossible to doubt their genuineness. (2) It is not possible to say with any certainty whether a given investigator seeking for what came to us spontaneously would succeed. (3) But try; and preferably with personal friends or alone with the medium you have proven. Our best wishes and all the help we can give are at your service.

TO THE DEAF.—A Person cured of Deafness and noises in the head of 23 years' standing by a simple remedy will send a description of it FREE to any person who applies to NICHOLSON, 21, Bedford Square, London, W.C.